



ΤΑΙΝΙΟΘΗΚΗ
ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ
> ΜΟΥΣΕΙΟ
ΚΙΝΗΜΑΤΟΓΡΑΦΟΥ

PRESS RELEASE
10th ATHENS AVANT GARDE FILM FESTIVAL
20 NOVEMBER - 5 DECEMBER 2019
GREEK FILM ARCHIVE
10 YEARS AAGFF!

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

The Athens Avant-Garde Film Festival, the Greek Film Archive's favourite establishment has its birthday in November: it turns ten years old, and it will celebrate with many surprises to be announced shortly.

The 10th AAGFF will take place on the 20th of November until the 5th of December 2019, at the **Greek Film Archive (Venues A, B)** and **ExileRoom**, aspiring to bring to the foreground, that which is most fresh and groundbreaking in international contemporary cinema.

Today, the artistic director of the Festival **Maria Komninos** gives you a first taste of this years particularly rich programme, announcing the festival's international competition, official selection.

This years **International Competition** will include nine films by young directors who have experimented with new forms of narration; whilst frequently using techniques that combine fiction with documentary, in order to examine issues concerning identity; tensions within multi-cultural societies and the consequences of today's crisis in the youth — whilst often bringing to the fore, those who have been marginalised.

It includes narrative fiction films, but also documentaries that have arrived from the greatest festivals (from Cannes to Locarno), nearly all of which will have their Greek premieres — films attempting to break the barriers established by genres and categories. The festival's mission is to discover and charter the new grounds that have been broken, by modern cinema of our age.

International Competition Jury:

Haden Guest (American professor, director of the Harvard Film Archive), **Vasilis K. Karamitsanis** (director of the Anima Syros - International Animation Festival and chairman of the B of D of the National Opera of Greece), **Dimitris Koutsiabasakos** (distinguished Greek director), **Irena Bilic** (French - Serbian director and director of the festival L'Europe autour de l'Europe in Paris), **Gaëlle Jones** (French film producer).

But lets see which films are competing:

- * In the hybrid **143 rue du désert** by the Algerian Hassen Ferhani (Greek premiere, fiction) from **Algeria, France and Qatar** — Malika the protagonist, is an owner of a small cafe on the national road that crosses the desert. Truck drivers, tourists on motorcycles and frequent guests that bring news of the nearby town El Menia, are served in Malika's backyard — a seemingly deserted place that in reality, is vibrating with life. A few weeks ago this film received the award for **Best Emerging Director at the Locarno Film Festival**.
- * Childhood best mates, Johnno and Spanner, are the two heroes of **Beats** by Brian Welsh (Greek premiere, fiction) from the **United Kingdom**. On the cusp of their adulthood in 1994, life is destined to take them in different directions. A film about friendship, uprising and the rave movement, with riotous electronic music from a director who won an Emmy for his episode in the revolutionary series "Black Mirror".
- * In **Cat Sticks** by Ronny Sen (Greek premiere, fiction) from **India**, on a rainy night in Calcutta a group of desperate addicts chase for dope. A relentless downpour plays backdrop to lives balanced on a precarious high. In his first film the Indian Ronny Sen, who has directed documentaries for the BBC, transforms elements from the great Indian director Satyajit Ray and the American Abel Ferrara. The director will be present in his film's screening in Greece.
- * Fifteen-year-old Ihjãc has nightmares since he lost his father. He is an indigenous Krahô from the north of Brazil. The life choices that he has to make are at the heart of the narrative fiction film by Renée Nader Messoro and João Salaviza **The Dead and the Others (Chuva é cantoria na aldeia dos mortos)** from **Portugal and Brazil**. João Salaviza is considered one of the most important young

Portuguese directors today. He has been awarded with the Golden Bear at the Berlinale and with the Palme d'Or at Cannes for his short films.

- * In the narrative fiction film from **Argentina, Again Once Again (De Nuevo Otra Vez)** by Romina Paula (Greek premiere), Romina is separated from her husband and is temporarily living with her four-year-old son in her mother's home in Buenos Aires. The director and actor of the film points the camera on her self, in order to find out anew who she is, whilst using her true son in the process. Romina Paula's first film — something between documentary and fiction, is a fragile quest for motherhood, femininity and adulthood free from any conservatisms.

- * The documentary **Filmfarsi** by Ehsan Khoshbakht from **Iran and the United Kingdom** (Greek premiere) reveals to us a rare view of pre-revolutionary popular Iranian cinema before it was banned in 1979. According to the important British film theoretician, Laura Mulvey: "As a long standing admirer of the New Iranian Cinema, I often wondered about its popular predecessor. Ehsan Khoshbakht has finally opened up this story. His essayistic, meditative and cinephile analysis celebrates an unashamedly exploitative genre, steeped in sex and violence".

- * **Asako I & II (Netemo sametemo)** by the Japanese Ryûsuke Hamaguchi (Greek premiere, fiction) from **Japan and France**, is based on a novel by Tomoka Shibasaki. Asako, a shy student from Osaka falls madly in love with Baku, a handsome and mysterious youth who one day suddenly disappears. Two years later Asako meets someone with a striking resemblance to Baku. However, he will offer a love to Asako that is so reassuring it scares her. **Asako I & II** was an official selection at Cannes.

- * The French Jean-Gabriel Périot, for his experimental documentary **Nos Défaites**, which we will see in its Greek Premiere from **France**, collaborated with a group of teenage students who reenact specific scenes from films: strikes, uprisings and labor mobilisations, from the late 1960's and early 1970's such as from "La Chinoise" by Jean-Luc Godard. Whilst at first the students fail to grasp the notion of political enlistment, gradually they realise that the past resonates with the present political situation.

- * From **Switzerland** we have **Love Me Tender** by Swiss-Peruvian Klaudia Reynicke (Greek premiere, fiction). Its heroine is Seconda, a thirty-two-year-old woman with acute agoraphobia, trapped in her family apartment and solitary routine, reminding one of Lanthimos's heroine in "Dogtooth". When

her mother dies and her father abandons her, she is forced to fight with her demons and defend herself.

Greek Film Archive

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Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης

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GREEK FILM ARCHIVE

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